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The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order

Letter dated 11 August 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instruction of my Government, I have the honour to request you, pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, to include a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the Assembly entitled "The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order". Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I attach herewith an explanatory memorandum (see annex).

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Ambassador
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Annex to the letter dated 11 August 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Guyana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Explanatory memorandum

The role of the United Nations in promoting a new global human order

Purpose

The proposal for a new global human order is intended to prompt a re-examination of international cooperation and partnership and to explore the prospects of a viable consensus on people-centred development as a central pillar of the work of the United Nations in development in the twenty-first century.

Such an undertaking is now imperative in light of the manifold initiatives on development that have been embarked upon over the past five decades and the comparably meagre results that have ensued. The series of United Nations conferences held during the 1990s, which are among the most recent démarches by the international community in this regard, established the centrality of people-centred development, together with a consensus on critical aspects to be addressed through national action and international cooperation. However, the review processes that have taken place to date point to a certain disappointment and frustration over the lack of progress in implementation.

The urgent need therefore exists to impart fresh momentum to the achievement of international economic and social cooperation, for new approaches to development, including on the question of resources. This is illustrated by the attempts on all fronts, including the leading financial and trade institutions, to redefine and reconfigure the parameters of development assistance. The functioning of the international machinery in support of development also needs to be examined with a view to promoting greater coherence and coordination. The Millennium Assembly of the United Nations provides a unique opportunity for a fresh look at both the problems and possibilities of international cooperation.

Background and rationale

The call for a new global human order was first made at the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995 by then President of Guyana, Dr. Cheddi Jagan. Since then, it has found echo in a number of international forums, including the Caribbean Community, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and most recently the Group of 77. At the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), held in Georgetown, Guyana, in July 1995, CARICOM heads expressed their support for the call for a new global human order. In the Declaration of the South Summit held in Havana in April 2000, heads of State and Government of the Group of 77 and China stressed, *inter alia*, "the need for a new global human order aimed at reversing the growing disparities between rich and poor, both among and within countries, through the promotion of growth with equity, the eradication of poverty, the expansion of

productive employment and the promotion of gender equality and social integration".

The deepening interdependence of nations and peoples, the consolidation of democracy in many countries across the globe, accelerated technological innovation and the end of the cold war offer potentially enhanced prospects for the achievement of these aims. However, the growing inequities and disparities that have accompanied the globablization of the world economy manifested by the increasing income and technological divide between developed and developing countries strongly militate against economic and social progress for the majority of humanity.

Objectives and proposed actions

The proposal for a new global human order seeks to build a strong political consensus and a broad-based global partnership to combat poverty and promote economic security throughout the world. This must be based on a long-term integrated approach to development that takes full account of how Governments, markets and societies interact and provides for the achievement of concrete development results.

Political will and an enlightened international partnership are essential to successfully address the challenges of global poverty and inequity and the promotion of full human development. Such a partnership needs to involve all relevant actors, Member States, the international community and non-governmental actors. It could address the linkages between issues of vital importance to the developing world and concerns in the developed countries and promote solutions to common problems.

The partnership should endeavour to build on the vital work done to date by the United Nations in development, including in the series of United Nations conferences held during the 1990s and, more importantly, to provide new impetus to the implementation of the many development initiatives undertaken under the auspices of the Organization. To this end, the proposal envisages the coordination by the world community of efforts towards effective action that is people-centred, aimed at promoting fully the social and economic welfare of the peoples of the world. It will further sensitize the international community to the compelling need to focus not merely on the financial and economic factors but also on moral and social imperatives that place people's livelihood at the centre of material development.

The proposal envisages a number of concrete initiatives aimed at addressing critical issues of human development. Investment, technical and economic assistance remain principal instruments to support the development undertakings of developing countries. It seeks to advance further action on three major fronts. First, there is the fundamental need to facilitate a reshaping of the role of government in order to build the democratic instruments necessary for human development. This will facilitate the strengthening of the capabilities to provide the services and infrastructure necessary to forging the requisite synergies between economic growth, poverty reduction and social development. Secondly, it seeks to mobilize enhanced political support for development. The developed countries must be urged to take definitive action to honour their obligations regarding the United Nations official development assistance (ODA) target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP), given the overall improvement in their economic conditions. It is also important that official debt relief be adequately financed though not at the expense

of resources for development assistance. Further, while the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) debt initiative is an important step to assist developing countries in obtaining resources to address poverty, greater effort is required to allow countries to qualify for debt relief on the grounds of the incidence of poverty. Third, the proposal seeks to facilitate a genuine consensus on the promotion of social justice, ownership and good governance, at both the national and international levels. These are key elements in the promotion of human development. To this end, consideration should be given to the establishment of an international arbitration process which would balance the interests of donors, international financial institutions, transnational corporations and developing countries with a view to introducing greater discipline in international cooperation.

Role of the United Nations

The United Nations remains the premier institution of the world community for forging global consensus on issues of universal concern. It spearheaded the struggles for decolonization and political independence. It must now, in an increasingly interdependent world and in keeping with the mandate of its Charter, play a pivotal role in promoting higher standards of living in larger freedom for the benefit of all of the world's peoples.